



# Kinzie–Fulton Market New Metra Station

Community Meeting

**DRAFT** October 12, 2021 | 6:00 pm



# Community Agreements

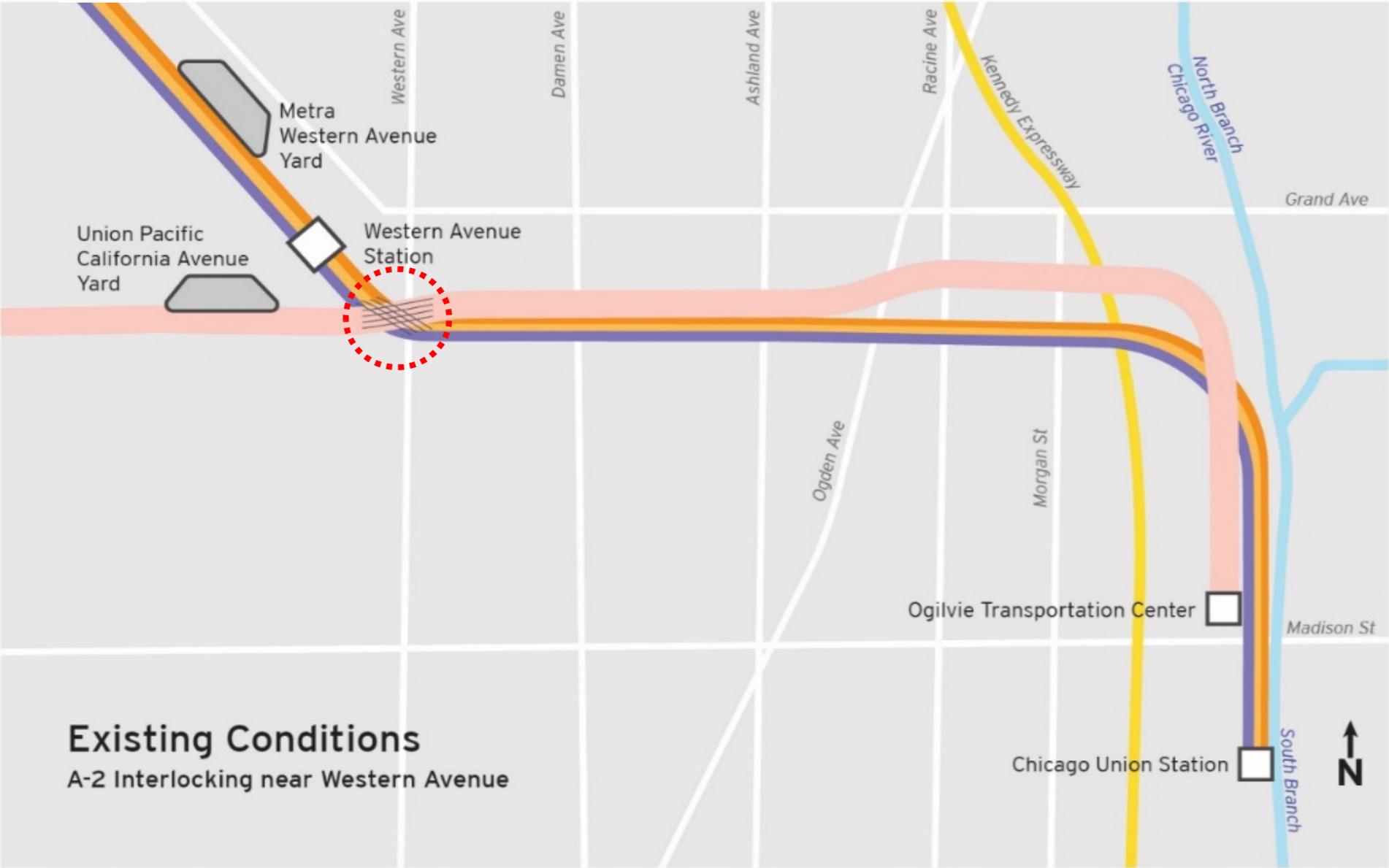


1. This is a Zoom webinar format and this meeting is being recorded.
2. The recording will be available on DPD's webpage:  
<http://www.chicago.gov/westloop>
1. Please use the **Zoom Q&A function** for any questions during the webinar.
4. All questions and ideas are valid.
5. Questions may be responded to from the project team either in writing or verbally during this meeting.

# Agenda

- Improvements at A-2 Interlocking (Metra)
- New Station Feasibility Assessment (CDOT)
- Timeline and Next Steps (CDOT & Metra)
- Questions (CDOT & Metra)

# Metra A-2 corridor overview



The A-2 interlocking, at Kinzie and Western, is where four Metra lines (UP-W, MD-N, MD-W, NCS) intersect adjacent to two major Metra yards.

Trains from three additional lines (UP-NW, UP-N, HC) traverse A-2 to access daytime maintenance and storage.

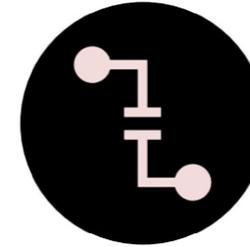


Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

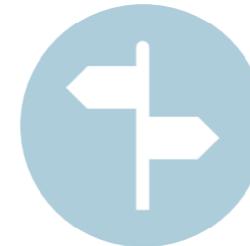
Existing A-2 Interlocking looking west

# A-2 is at the heart of Metra's System

- Metra is currently evaluating solutions to maintain and improve the A-2 interlocking
- A-2 is the busiest interlocking in the region's commuter rail network
  - Critical bottleneck and cause of train conflicts that can increase passenger delays
- A-2 improvements will give Metra the ability to add more frequent train service and improve reliability



The A-2 interlocking is a system chokepoint that limits the number of Metra trains that can serve Chicago



Trains passing through the A-2 interlocking serve 7 of 11 Metra lines



Over half of Metra riders rely on trains that pass through the A-2 interlocking



The reliability and efficiency of the A-2 interlocking impacts Metra's ability to add and improve service

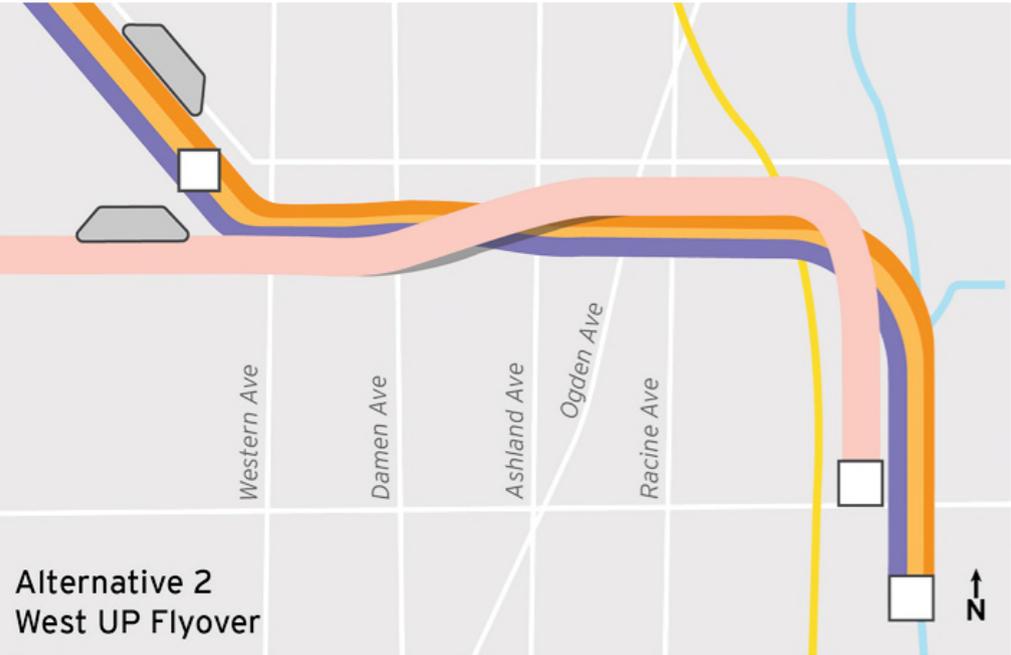
Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

# A-2 project overview

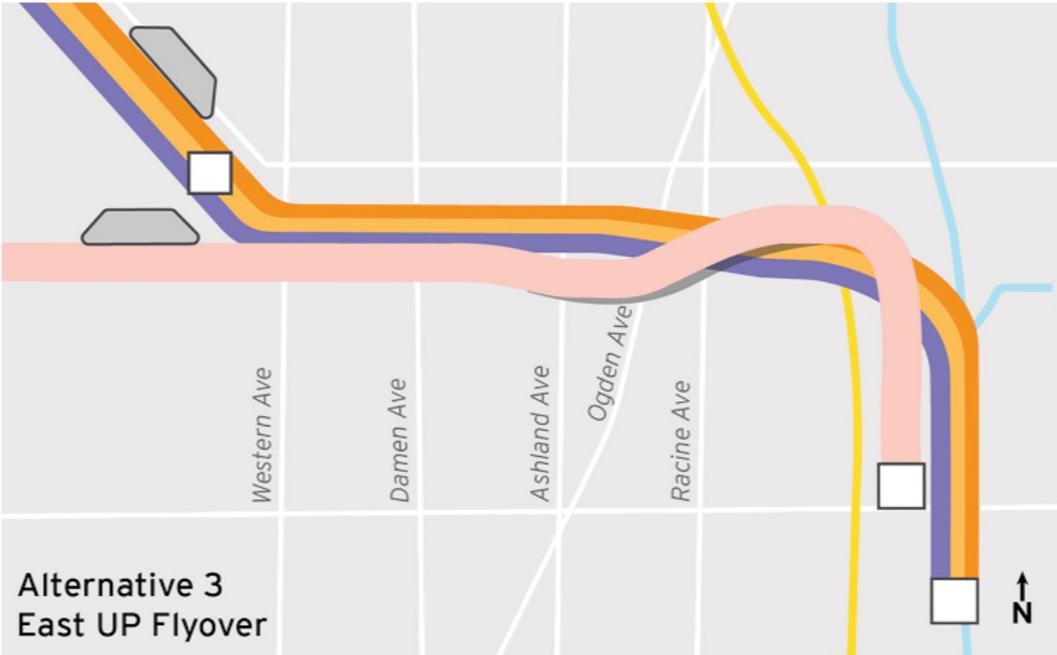
- Over 200 trains daily on seven train lines cross at grade at the A-2 interlocking.
- Delays and a bottleneck in service to downtown result from the at-grade crossing.
- A-2 flyover will prevent bottleneck, enable added capacity and allow for expanded service to the West Side and O'Hare.
- Adding a new Metra station would serve the growing Fulton Market and Kinzie Industrial Corridor areas. It would provide a more convenient transit option for traveling between work and home.
- However, a new station cannot be added unless the A-2 flyover is implemented to create capacity to stop trains in the area.

# A-2 flyover alternatives

Following concept design, alternatives 2 & 3 are still under consideration. Metra has begun value engineering to determine the most cost-effective solutions along with operations modeling before the project can move into full design and environmental analysis.



Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study



Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study



Example of existing Metra flyover in Englewood

# Metra's Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations

Per **Metra's Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations**,\* the site screening process for the Kinzie-Fulton Market New Metra Station:

- Is data-driven and quantifiable where feasible
- Weighs benefits to new riders against impacts to existing riders
- Conforms to all Metra standards (design, safety, accessibility)

\*Source: Metra. Draft Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations. March 20, 2019

# New Metra Station positioned to serve various existing / future markets & service plans

screening criteria:  
operating plans, markets served

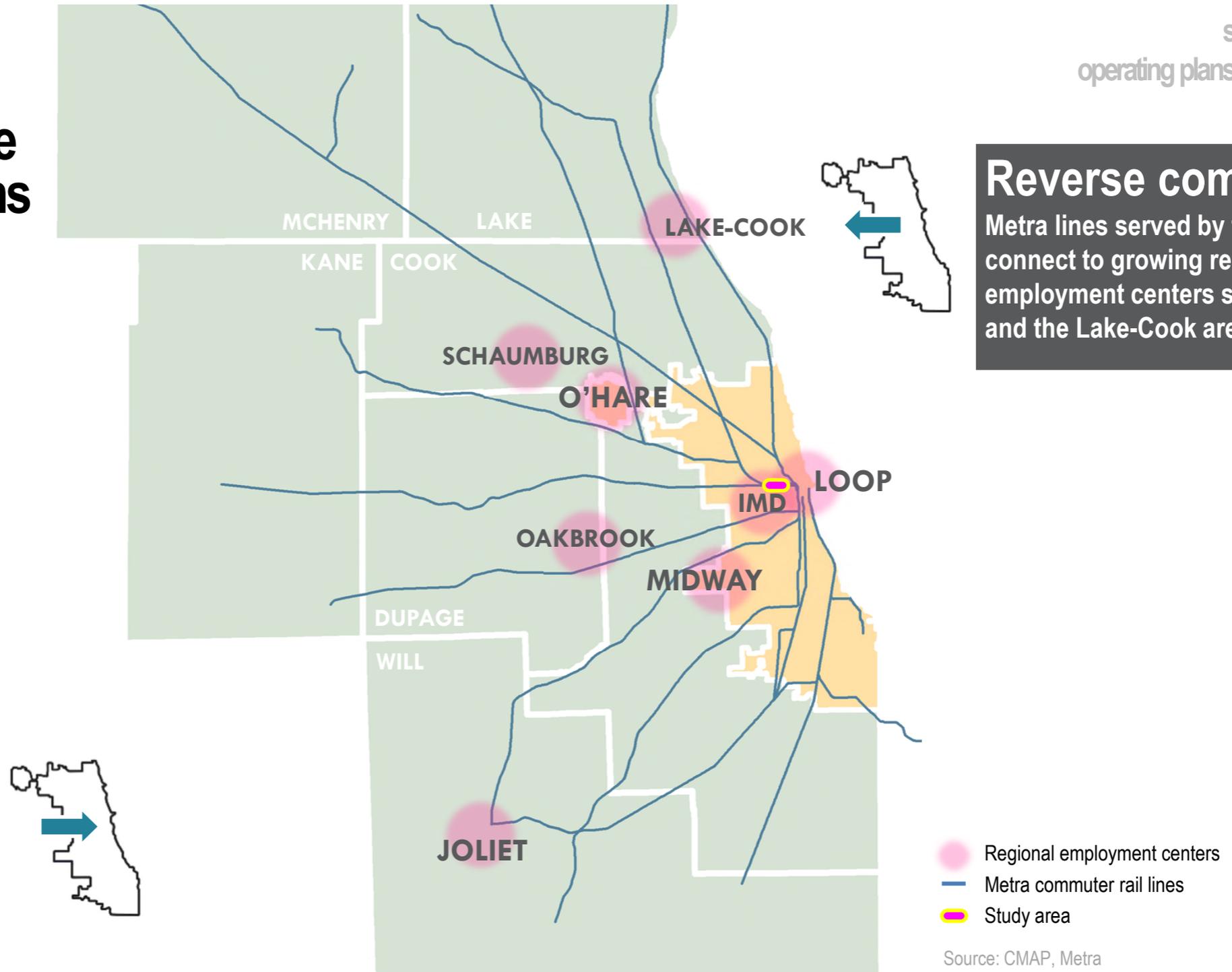
## Reverse commute

Metra lines served by the new station connect to growing regional employment centers such as O'Hare and the Lake-Cook area

## Traditional commute

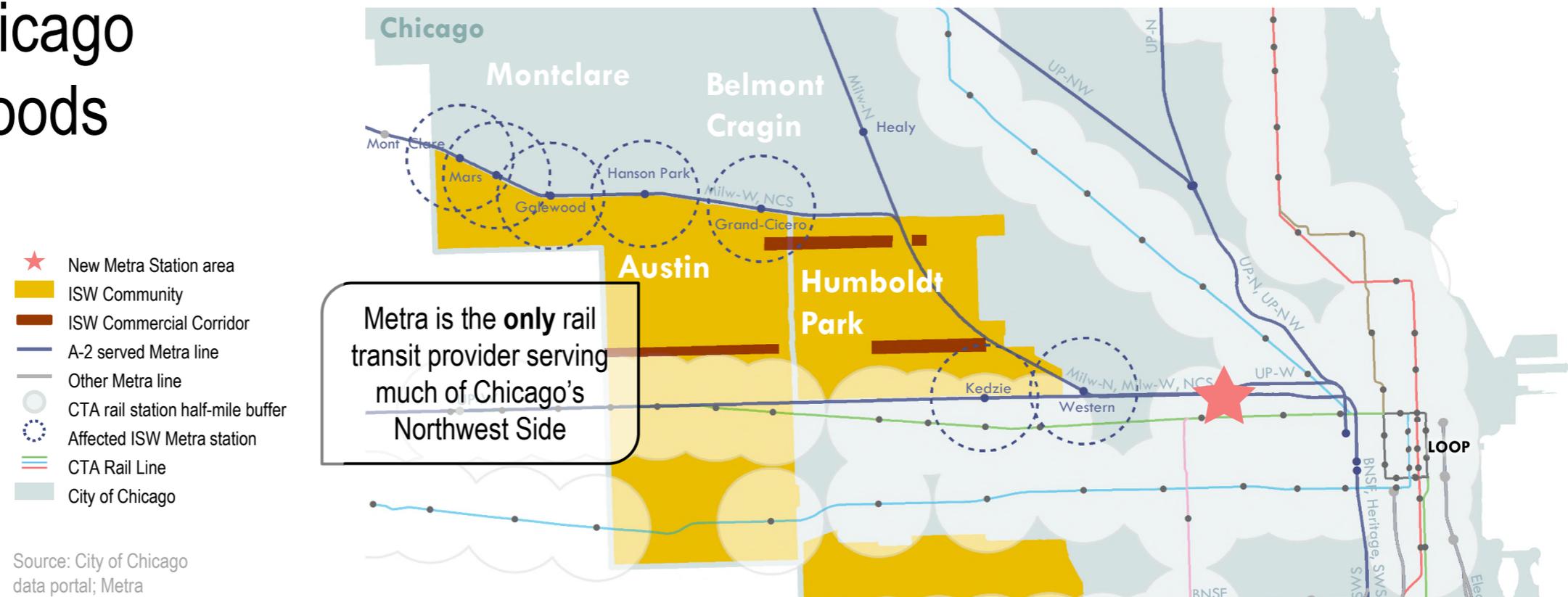
New Metra Station improves Chicago's and the region's transportation connections to growing employment markets west of the Loop

- Will reduce the need for traditional inbound commuters to "backtrack" from the Loop to access opportunities to the west



## A-2 improvements & New Metra Station will:

- Enhance City & regional access
- Increase transit system connectivity
- Benefit Chicago neighborhoods



# Travel Market Assessment

- **Travel market considerations** include findings related to mobility, accessibility, and transit operations within the study area and beyond
- Metra's A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study identified five potential station platform locations for further station site screening: Damen, Ashland (east and west), Ogden, & Racine
- This analysis conforms with Metra's Draft Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations
- This analysis informs a **site screening evaluation** that will identify a preferred new station site



screening criteria:  
access to jobs, equity

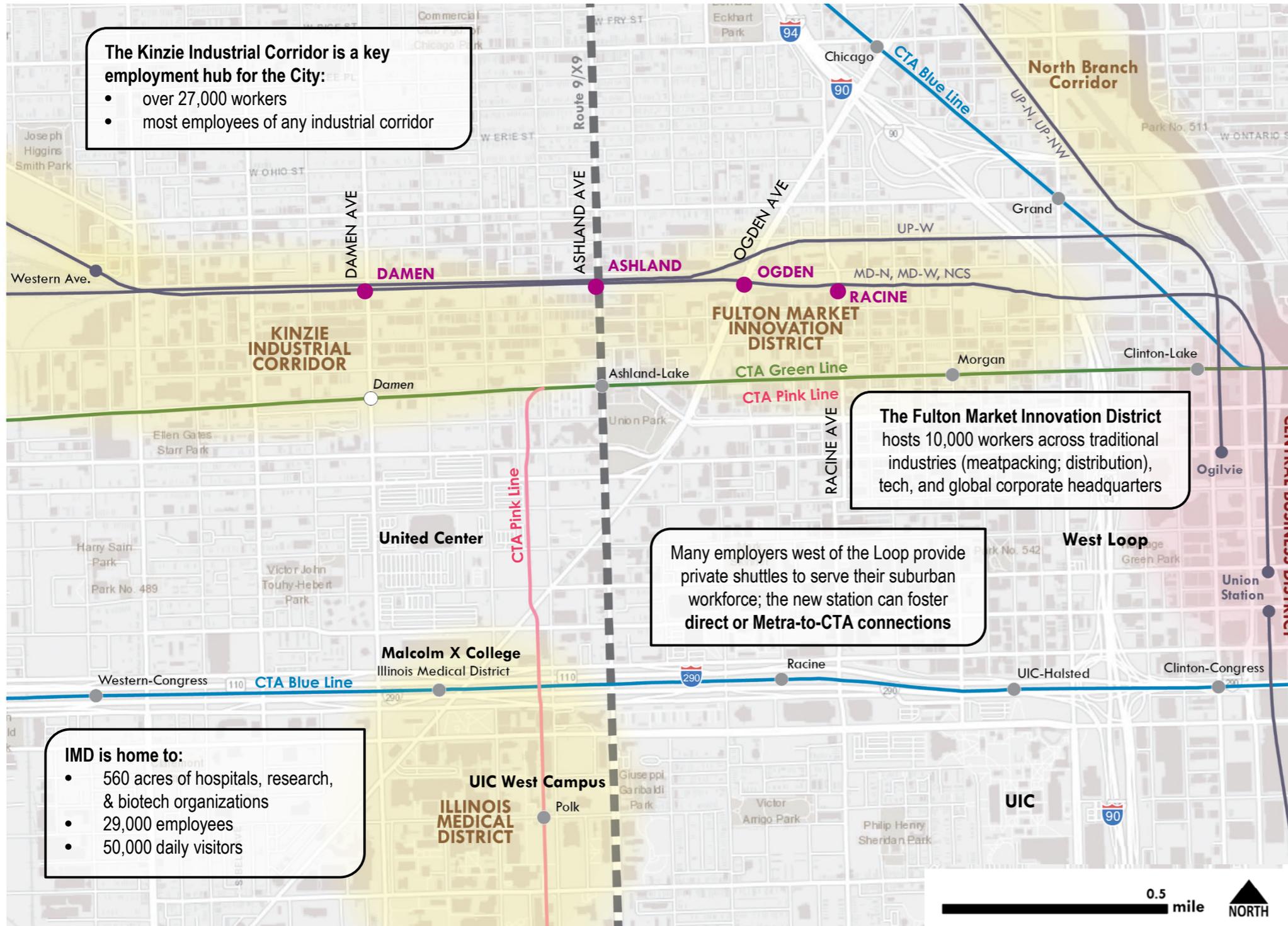
## Improved access to City employment centers

**Increased connectivity to job centers beyond the Loop:** New Metra station can provide improved access to IMD, Kinzie Industrial Corridor, Fulton Market, United Center, and various educational institutions

Some of Chicago's most **disadvantaged populations** work in employment hubs outside the Loop, especially in the IMD/UIC-area [1]

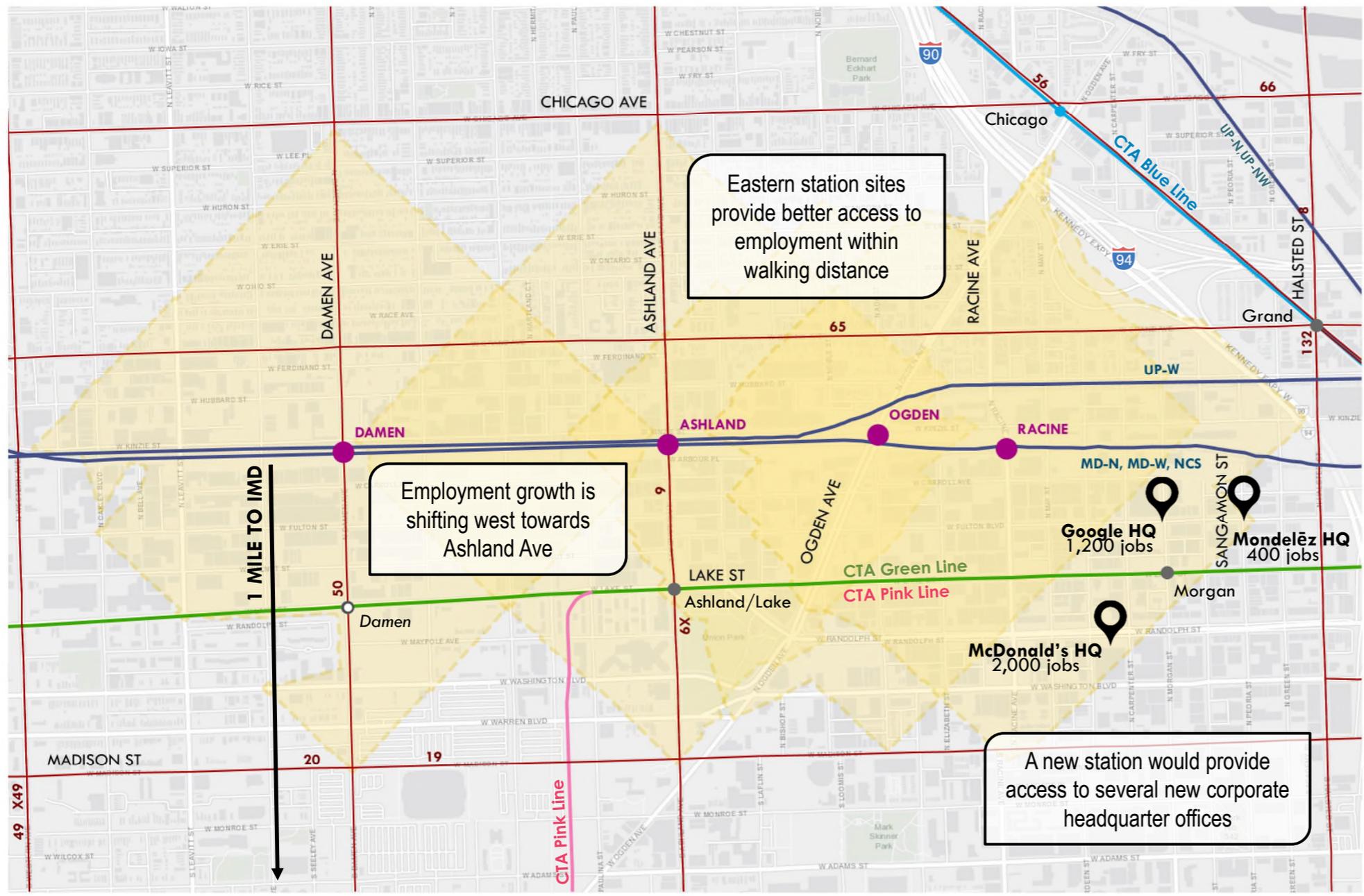
**Key connection** to high-capacity CTA Bus Routes 9 & X9 along Ashland Ave

Source: City of Chicago Kinzie Framework Plan (2017 job data); IMD Master Plan 2019; North Branch: Census LEHD analysis 2017; City of Chicago data portal; DPD FMID Plan; [1] RTA 2017 RTA Regional Transit Market Assessment, CMAP "Travel patterns in Economically Disconnected Area Clusters" Report, 2018



screening criteria:  
access to jobs, station access

# Jobs near potential station sites

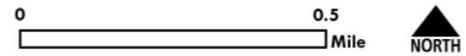


## Walkshed employment

Damen	Ashland	Ogden	Racine
4,800	19,700	23,700	24,500

Source: Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) data, 2017

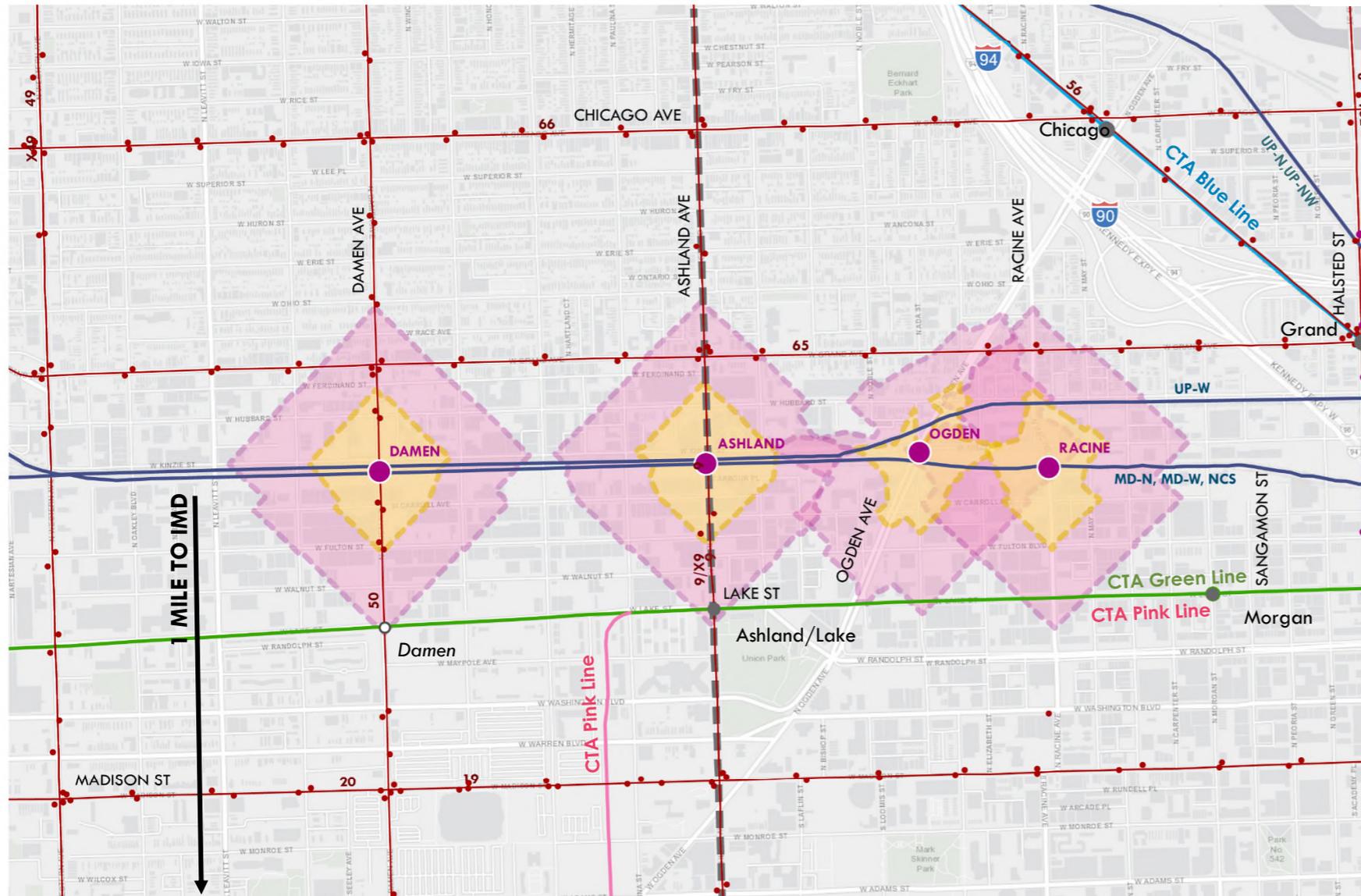
- Potential Station Location
- 1/2 mile walkshed
- CTA Rail Line
- Metra Commuter Rail
- CTA Bus Route
- CTA Rail Station
- Future CTA Rail Station



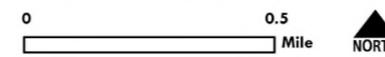
Map source: ESRI Network Analyst; HQ employment source: Chicago Tribune, January 2020

# Transit network connectivity

screening criteria:  
transit network connectivity, station access



- Potential Station Location
- 1/8 mile walkshed
- 1/4 mile walkshed
- CTA Rail Line
- Metra Commuter Rail
- CTA Bus Route
- CTA Rail Station
- Future CTA Rail Station
- CTA Bus Stop



Source: ESRI Network Analyst

## CTA rail & bus boardings near potential station locations

	Damen	Ashland	Ogden	Racine
within 1/8 mile	78	60	0	0
within 1/4 mile	413	5,623	146	105

Source: CTA, ESRI Network Analyst

Ashland location provides best connectivity to existing CTA bus and rail service, based on the walkshed analysis summarized above

Ashland (CTA Routes 9/X9) is busiest north-south bus route in the City (22,000 daily trips)

Ashland new station site is a 5-minute walk from existing CTA Green and Pink Line station; Damen new station site is a 5-minute walk from future CTA Green Line station

# Gate down time analysis

screening criteria:  
traffic delay, at-grade safety

## At-grade crossings near potential Racine station location

### AM peak: 7-9 AM

Racine Avenue      May Street      Aberdeen Street

Baseline	
total gate downtime	30 min
% of total gate downtime	25% of peak
Racine Station	
total gate downtime	69 min
% of total gate downtime	57% of peak

### PM peak: 4-6 PM

Racine Avenue      May Street      Aberdeen Street

Baseline	
total gate downtime	26 min
% of total gate downtime	22% of peak
Racine Station	
total gate downtime	45 min
% of total gate downtime	37% of peak



Source: Google Earth; Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

## Racine location would significantly increase grade crossing delays

Racine is the only at-grade potential station location. Slower travel speeds before and after stopping will result in longer gate down times at grade crossings.

Because three crossings are within 1,000 feet of the potential Racine station site, gates would remain down at all three crossings during station dwell for eastbound trains.

Note: Build scenario assumes Racine, May, and Aberdeen crossings remain open and at grade, and assumes same train volumes as Baseline. Traffic counts unavailable at Aberdeen Street. Source: Analysis of Metra trip data 2019, Metra train length, and Metra rolling stock inventory data; Google Earth; IDOT traffic counts; Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

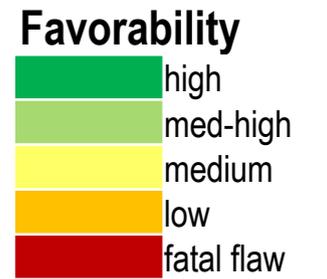
# Screening methodology

Screening addresses advantages / disadvantages of each potential station site from the following perspectives:

1. Travel market
2. Multimodal network
3. Rail operations
4. Land use / development
5. Implementation

Screening is informed by the conditions and analysis just presented

# Station site screening evaluation matrix



Potential station site	Travel market		Multi-modal network				Rail operations		Land use / Development		Implementation	
	station spacing	markets served	station access	transit network connectivity	access to jobs	street traffic delay	platform access	at-grade safety	development potential	ROW impact / environment	equity	community support
Damen	low	med-high	high	med-high	medium	high	high	high	med-high	high	high	high
Ashland [west]	high	high	high	high	high	high	high	med-high	high	med-high	high	high
Ashland [east]	high	high	high	high	high	high	high	med-high	high	med-high	high	high
Ogden	high	high	medium	medium	high	high	high	med-high	high	med-high	high	high
Racine	high	high	medium	medium	high	fatal flaw	low	medium	med-high	high	high	high

Note: "Fatal flaw" designation removes station site from future consideration.

## Summary

- **Highest favorability at both Ashland sites;**  
**Ashland [east] site is recommended, with pedestrian links to Ogden and Ashland [west]**
- Ogden stand-alone site lacks transit connections, but has good walk access to Fulton Market area
- Station spacing and operational issues affect the Damen site
- Racine site eliminated from future consideration due to safety issues, pedestrian and traffic delays at grade crossings, and inability to serve Metra lines from OTC

Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

# Screening recommendation

## Ashland to Ogden

- Future design concept will focus on platform(s) at the **Ashland [east]** station location, with pedestrian connections to/from Ogden and Ashland [west]
- Concept will leverage **platform length** to combine the benefits of the three most highly evaluated potential station sites



Note: for illustrative purposes only

Source: Google Earth; Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study

**Ashland access critical for CTA transfer** to support ridership and broader connectivity

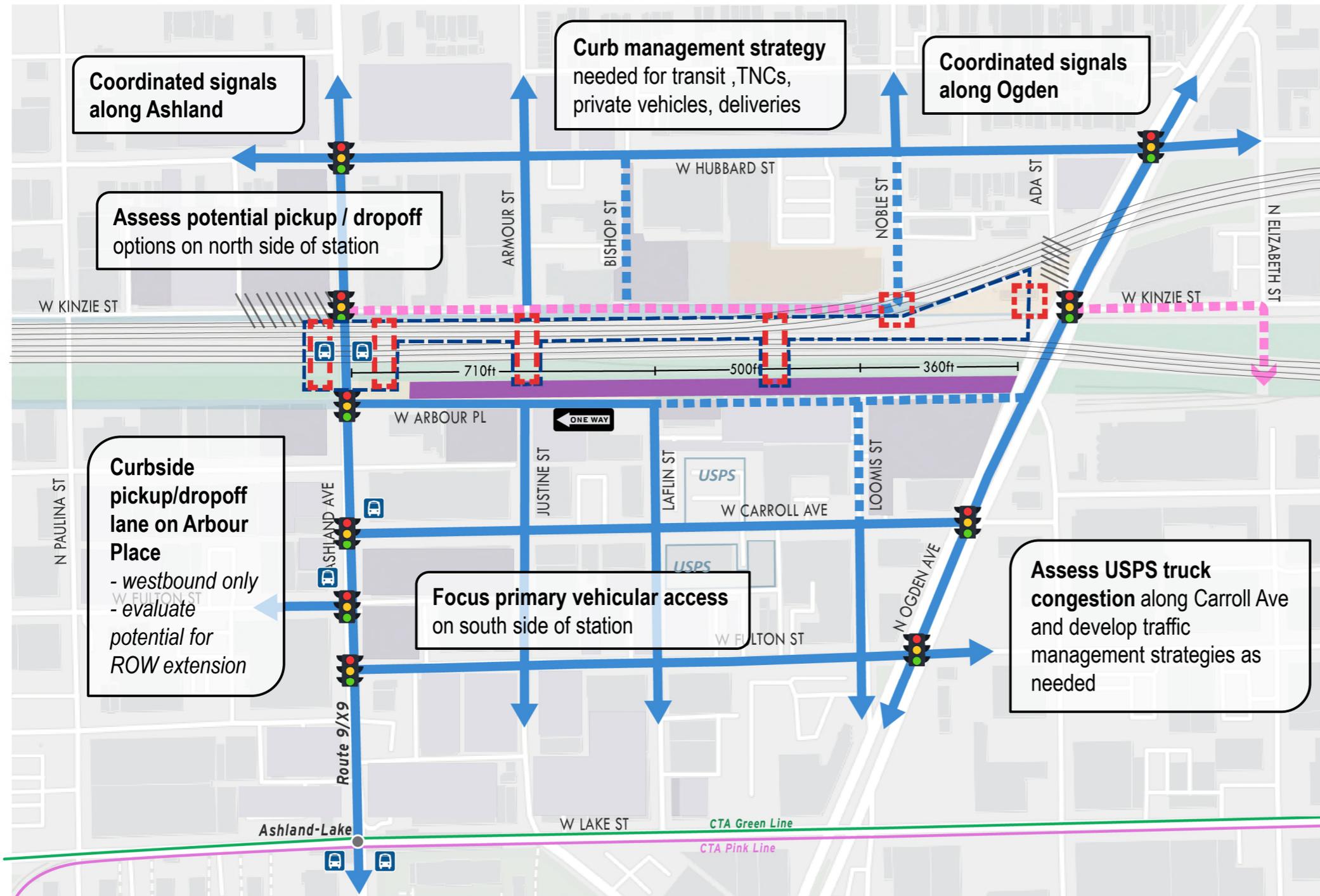
Easy and safe **pedestrian access to platforms from Ogden is also important**

Ability to access platforms from both sides of Ashland is a priority

Bus and curbside transfer facilities are possible along Ashland, Ogden, and Arbour Place

There are opportunities for supportive private development on and near this site

# Ashland-Ogden Station Site Roadway Circulation



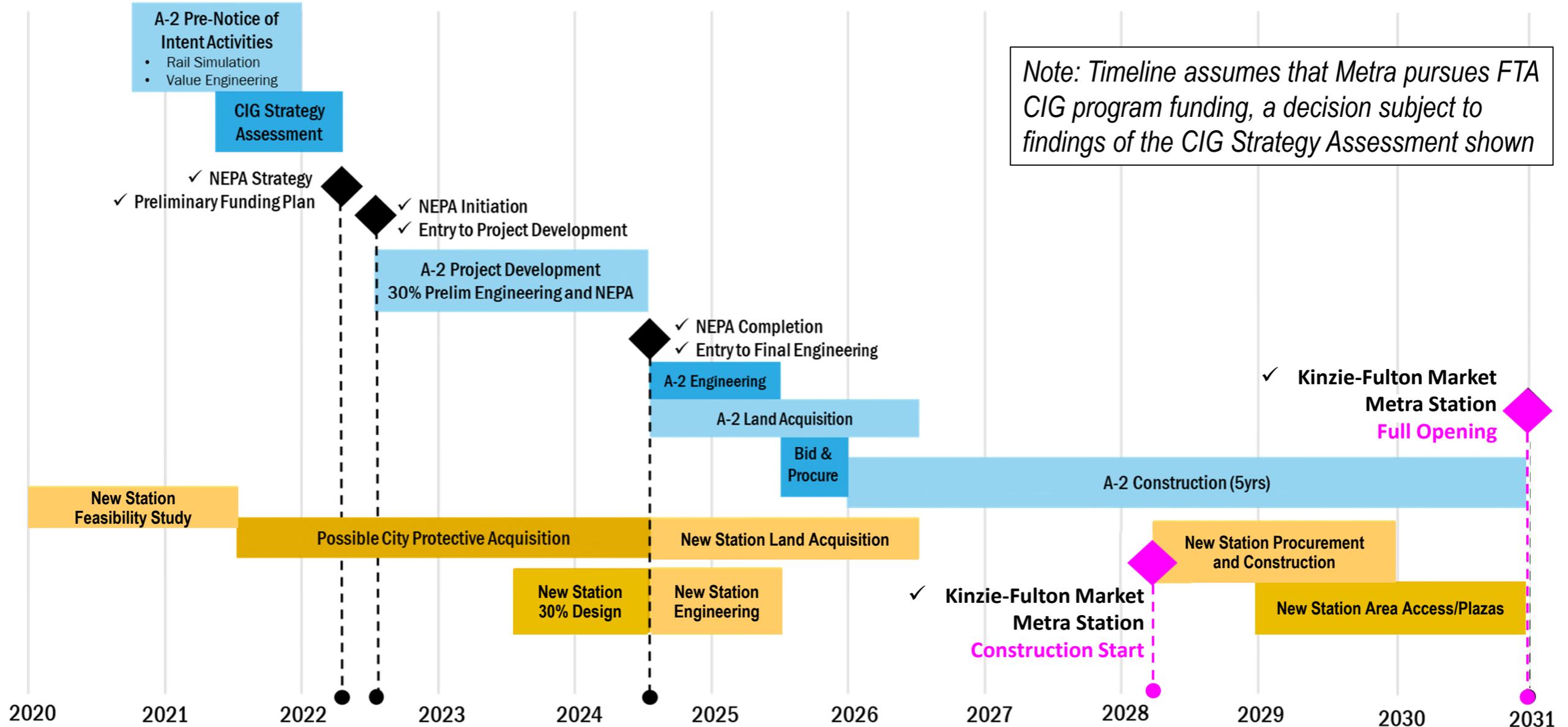
## LEGEND

- Approx. Station Extent at-grade
- Station Entry Points
- Vacate/block off
- Existing Vehicle Access Route
- Proposed Vehicle Access Route
- Proposed Pedestrian Access Corridor
- Proposed Curbside Pick-up/Drop-off Zone
- Signalization Improvements
- Side-Boarding Bus Stops



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# Composite potential timeline – A-2 & New Station



# A-2 & New Station preliminary draft cost estimate

A-2 Flyover	New Station & Site Prep	Total Cost
\$1.0-1.2 billion	\$400-500 million	\$1.4 - 1.7 billion

Note that these cost estimates are very preliminary and subject to change as further planning and design progresses.

# A-2 & New Station next steps

## A-2 current tasks

- Value engineering study (will inform New Station refinements)
- Assessment of federal discretionary funding compatibility

## A-2 next milestone

- Initiation of Environmental Analysis (NEPA) - 2022-23
- Initiation of federal discretionary funding process – 2022-23

## New Station next milestones

- Initiate protective land acquisitions
- Identify funding for additional analysis and preliminary engineering

# Q & A

Additional questions can be sent to:

[CDOT email needed]

[DPD@CityofChicago.org](mailto:DPD@CityofChicago.org)